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ABSTRACT

This user guide covers "Liberty and Justice," and offers suggestions for preparatory activities, lessons, and follow-up activities for primary, intermediate, and upper grade students. Goals for the series are to help children: (1) become familiar with the democratic process and active citizenship; (2) recognize what it means to be a citizen in a multi-cultural society; (3) build skills in communications and cooperation; (4) recognize how laws are made and how a single vote and voice matter; and (5) experience how caring and commitment build community. The objective of "Liberty and Justice" is for children to explore the concept of liberty and justice for all. The guide contains a 15-item bibliography. (LAP)

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ED 404 245

For Grades K-6

My America
Building a Democracy

CC

Available in English and Spanish

Liberty and Justice

User Guide

SO 026 537

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My America: Building a Democracy

GOALS

To help children:

- become familiar with the democratic process and active citizenship,
- recognize what it means to be a citizen in a multicultural society,
- build skills in communications and cooperation,
- recognize how laws are made and how a single vote and voice matter, and
- experience how caring and commitment build community.

FORMAT

MY AMERICA is a 12-unit series, consisting of:

- 15-20 minute videos
- User Guides
- Resource Directory Disks (MS-DOS & MAC)

Materials were designed by educators, for educators. An interdisciplinary approach to hands-on learning is used.

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

The MY AMERICA kits motivate children to participate actively in their schools and local communities, and to experience the democratic process. The series attempts to demystify the government, explain how laws are made, and show how American democracy is always evolving. MY AMERICA combines elements of traditional civics and social studies curricula with techniques and activities that encourage children to participate and become involved. **Its underlying theme is: Democracy works best when everyone participates.**

MY AMERICA teaches in the voices of children in a way that respects their intelligence and natural curiosity.

THE VIDEOS

Each tape contains on-location documentaries, animation and historical illustration. A classroom modeling lesson encourages children to use their skills in reading, writing, listening, painting, singing and performing. The cooperative learning model is central to each video.

Videos are developed within the following framework:

Kid View: Children give thought-provoking, lively opinions on each topic.

Documentary: Historical context and current concerns are blended with examples of children making a difference in their communities. This section is rich in historical information and opens up a wide range of discovery possibilities.

Modeling Lesson: Educators and students develop an interdisciplinary activity designed to bring alive the educational objective of the video.

Wrap Up: The key concept is recapped from the diverse perspectives of both children and adults.

"Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead

PAUSE POINTS

The videotapes can be used in a variety of ways. Some educators use the tapes to teach three separate lessons on a concept. To facilitate this usage, a blackboard icon comes up between the Kid View, the Documentary and the Modeling Lesson, giving educators appropriate PAUSE POINTS during which to elaborate on concepts.

THE USER GUIDES

Guides provide multiple learning experiences, lesson plans and bibliographies built around social studies and citizenship themes. Suggested activities are interdisciplinary in approach and focus on skills in communication and cooperation.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY DISKS (MS-DOS & MAC)

MY AMERICA Resource Directory Disks include black-lined master activity sheets, samples of letters to parents and organizations, petitions, proclamations and press releases—all of which can be customized. Also included are a listing of additional resources, bibliographic references for students and teachers, historical documents, and curriculum correlations.

This icon 💾 indicates that additional material is available on the MY AMERICA Resource Directory Disk.

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Liberty and Justice

My America
Building a Democracy

Educational objective:

Children explore the concept of liberty and justice for all.

Student concept:

I believe everyone should be treated equally.

"America is a place with hope, freedom, and rights."

—Fifth Grader
Washington, DC

Video preview

In America, people try to achieve the ideals of liberty and justice for all. In this video, children share their views on prejudice and how it feels to be treated unfairly. Traveling to the Statue of Liberty, the Lincoln Memorial and the Supreme Court, we see how these ideals, which cannot be seen or touched, are symbolized by monuments. Children learn about the history of these special structures and important events that happened around them as, for example, the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington. Children and adults talk about working together to help America live up to its dream. After discussing ideals they cherish, a class builds monuments to them.

Suggestions for using "Liberty and Justice"

As an Opening and/or Culminating Experience to a Unit of Study: The video and suggested activities are designed to supplement your existing social studies curriculum. They are highly motivating resources to introduce and engage students in how monuments are symbols of ideals and how Americans are working together to achieve these ideals.

As an Individual Lesson: Suggested activities can be used to open discussion on designing a public structure, on symbols and prejudice, and on understanding holidays like Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, the Civil Rights Movement, the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. or Presidents Day. Activities are divided into those appropriate for primary, intermediate and upper elementary school children.

As an Assembly Program: To prepare students for the video, each class experiences the Modeling Lesson Activity outlined on page 3. Students display their symbol sketches in the halls. A lead teacher elicits from a class spokesperson the range and number of ideas represented and then makes a graph of the information. After seeing the video, two children from each class present their monuments to an ideal.

My America
Building a Democracy

Liberty and Justice

Getting ready to view the video

"When we introduced the idea of justice, the children did not know what it meant. But when we defined justice as fairness, they could readily identify with it."

—Carol Jones
ModelingTeacher
Winifred Morse
Elementary School
North Tarrytown, NY

•The children "guestimate" the length of the statue's index finger (8 ft/2.4 meters), the width of its mouth (3 ft./.9 meters), the size of its waist (35 ft/10.6 meters.) To illustrate the scope, a few students lay head to toe and measure out the above distances with their bodies. They guestimate what the statue weighs (450,000 lbs/204,120 kilograms.) Children write their guesses on a piece of paper and place it in their pockets. (By listening carefully, they will find the answer in the video).

•Explain that they are about to see a video called *Liberty and Justice*. They will see how monuments are created to keep alive the memory of a great person, event or an ideal. Do they know what the word justice means? If possible, display a photo of a courtroom, or a sketch of the scales of justice, or the Supreme Court building. The children develop a definition of justice. Give them an opportunity to talk about an event in their lives in which they were/were not treated fairly.

Key vocabulary: liberty, justice, symbol, freedom, prejudice, ideal, monument, statue, immigrant, slavery, Emancipation Proclamation

Key phrases: "treated fairly and equally", "liberty and justice for all", "ideals of democracy", "scales of justice", "innocent until proven guilty", "the right to a jury of your peers", "equal justice"

Video Modeling Lesson: Making a Monument

★Write the words liberty and justice on the board. Children discuss the meaning of each word and agree that liberty means freedom and justice means fairness. Children express ways they are free in their lives. List their comments under freedom.

★Divide children into groups of two and three in which they jointly write a skit on freedom and/or fairness. This creative dramatics exercise produces simple dialogue to illustrate feelings of inclusion and exclusion.

★Why does the statue in New York Harbor of a green lady with a lamp mean anything? Why did Martin Luther King, Jr. choose to deliver his "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial? Focus discussion on the meaning of a symbol. The children express that a symbol stands for an idea.

★Working individually, with a partner or in small groups, the children sketch an idea for a symbol, create the symbol in clay and share their three-dimensional clay symbols with the entire class.

Modeling Lesson Materials: Use different color clay blocks, construction paper, markers, crayons, pencils, photographs of the Statue of Liberty, the Lincoln Memorial, the Liberty Bell, the U.S. Capitol and a sketch of a peace symbol.

Modeling Lesson Tip: It is easier to remove clay when it is rolled out on paper rather than a desk. Cut the clay up in small pieces before the activity.

Liberty and Justice

My America
Building a Democracy

Follow-up activities for primary grade children

★Monuments honor people and ideals. The lives of Frederic Auguste de Bartholdi, Emma Lazarus, Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. are full of powerful stories about dreams coming true. Read these stories, as well as stories about strong leaders like Hiawatha, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The children design a series of bulletin boards to share what touched them most.

★Many national monuments are in the Washington, DC area. On a map, the children find the District of Columbia; Liberty Island; Ellis Island, NY, Philadelphia, PA, and Paris, France. Next, take a neighborhood walk to see if any special structures or statues celebrate a local person or an ideal. If a monument needs clean up or restoration, children can organize community events and fundraisers. The children can adopt and maintain a statue in the park. Hold a seasonal celebration to share the monument project with parents and the community.

★Many countries in the world do not give individuals the freedoms they wish. Help children learn about the life in these countries for children their age, and compare that life to their own lives.

Follow-up activities for intermediate grade children

★Over the years, new monuments have been designed and built to honor people who died to preserve the ideals of liberty and justice. Children brainstorm who the people were and locate their monuments. Form groups to research these symbols; prepare a presentation to the entire class. Suggestions: The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Non-Violence in Atlanta, Georgia, the Vietnam War Memorial, the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC.

★Two groups of original Americans were the Anasazi and Sinagua Indians of the Southwest. They built their homes in red rock canyons and carved inscriptions called petroglyphs on the rock walls. The petroglyphs and rock dwellings are monuments to the lives and dreams of the Sinagua and Anasazi. Divide the children into groups in which they learn about the culture, oral tradition, language, food, spiritual and family life of these extinct native nations. Communicate findings in the form of two murals — one depicting four seasons in the life of the Anasazi, and the other a pictoral timeline of the Sinagua history.

★Children design and create a pictorial timeline of the monuments highlighted in the video and other national and local symbols they are studying. This can be a class project with small groups responsible for individual illustrations.

Did You Know That?

The Statue of Liberty is also called:

- **Copper Lady**
- **Liberty Enlightening the World**
- **Miss Liberty**
- **Ms. Liberty**
- **Lady Liberty**
- **Lady with the Lamp**
- **Mother of Exiles**
- **Lady of the Harbor**

The Emancipation Proclamation freed only the slaves who lived in the South.

Find It In The MY AMERICA

The full text of:

- **Emancipation Proclamation**
- **Bill of Rights**
- **"I Have a Dream," Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech**

My America
Building a Democracy

Liberty and Justice

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Follow-up activities for upper grade children

★Children often hear the following phrases on news shows—"innocent until proven guilty", "the right to a jury of your peers", "equal justice under the law". They may not fully understand what they actually mean. After detailed dictionary work, children create and share stories to illustrate these key phrases. Select a phrase and model the dictionary exercise and writing process with the whole class. The children read the town newspaper and look for examples of one of these phrases. Initiate a letter writing campaign to support a person, program or organization that promotes liberty and justice for all.

★Many ancestors of African-Americans were slaves. Denying their freedoms went against the ideals of democracy. People who worked to end slavery were called abolitionists. Three of the most famous of these bold, brilliant people were Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth. The children research the lives of these individuals and learn whether monuments exist to honor them. If none exist, form a committee to create them. Brainstorm other Americans who deserved national recognition but were overlooked. Create plans and timelines to begin the process of designing and building a monument.

★Children discuss how the symbolism and message of the Statue of Liberty relate to the poor and homeless in America today. How are these people benefiting from the ideals of democracy? The children may want to start getting involved with a local chapter of an organization that is helping. With freedom comes responsibility. How do these organizations promote active citizenship?

★People come to America seeking freedom as a right. For many immigrants, the Statue of Liberty and the Golden Gate Bridge are meaningful symbols. Many African-Americas were denied choice, Native Americans were denied land. Children write a diary entry for a young African-American child who arrived as a slave. Children write a poem of peace that a Native American child might have written long ago. They share diary entries and poems.

The MY AMERICA Newsletter publishes active citizenship projects and activities. Send your photos, stories, and videotapes to:

MY AMERICA Newsletter
c/o New Castle Communications
229 King Street
Chappaqua, NY 10514

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Check The MY AMERICA for additional books, resources and activity sheets.

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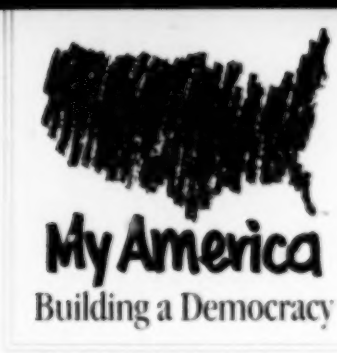

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MY AMERICA:
LEARNING ABOUT
DEMOCRACY

USER GUIDES and DIRECTORY DISK

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What Is a Flag?
A Pledge Is a Promise
Neighborhood and Community
Liberty and Justice
What Is an American?
The Story of the National Anthem
What Is a Democracy?
How Our Laws Are Made
Becoming an Active Citizen
Rights and Responsibilities

Teaching in a Multicultural Society (For Teachers)
Parents, Teachers and Community: Working Together (For Parents)

Resources available, AT NO CHARGE, when you purchase the entire multimedia series:
MY AMERICA Newsletter: published three times during the school year.
MY AMERICA Teacher Training Video: 10 classroom activities around civic issues.

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."

—The Great Law of the Six Nations
Iroquois Confederacy

About New Castle Communications, Inc.
MY AMERICA is published by New Castle Communications, Inc. The company is creating educational materials in video, print and computer software formats. New Castle Communications is committed to designing, producing and distributing multimedia materials that engage children and inspire them to get involved in their classrooms, schools and communities.

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